

EDUCATION, LEISURE & HOUSING

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ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

If telephoning please ask for Steven Burnett on extension 2421

27 August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

You will be aware that the Scottish Government has, this week, published new guidance which has implications for many pupils across Orkney.

From Monday 31st August 2020 all pupils aged 5 or over who use dedicated school transport will be asked to wear a face covering whilst being transported to and from school. The advice that no physical distancing is required between pupils using dedicated school transport has not changed and, as such, the capacity of school transport is unaffected.

For pupils aged 12 and above, Monday 31st August also sees the introduction of a requirement for face coverings to be worn in school corridors and confined communal areas where physical distancing is particularly difficult to maintain.

There is no other requirement to wear a face covering whilst in school. As was previously the case, however, all staff and pupils are welcome to wear a face covering should they so choose. Attached is a short guide to the use of face coverings to assist you in making this choice.

It is our expectation that all individuals will have access to, and will provide their own, suitable face coverings for use at school. For families who are eligible to School clothing Allowance we will provide an additional £10 per child to help with the costs of providing face coverings. Should your child not currently be in receipt of the School Clothing Allowance, but you believe that they may be eligible, then please visit the Council website and complete the application process.

Please note that whilst the Scottish Government is, through this latest guidance, indicating that pupils *should* wear face coverings in the specific circumstances described above, this is *not* mandatory. Consequently, whilst schools will monitor and encourage compliance, pupils will not be excluded from school, nor dedicated school transport, should they refuse or be unable to comply with this guidance. Any anti-social behaviour will continue to be dealt with through school and school transport behaviour policies.

Schools will maintain a small supply of face coverings which will be provided to pupils should they arrive at school without one and would like one, or if one breaks or becomes unclean during the school day.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Wylie', written over a white background.

James Wylie
Executive Director